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UM wildlife doctoral student snags \$80,000 scholarship

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NEWS RELEASE

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UM WILDLIFE DOCTORAL STUDENT SNAGS \$80,000 SCHOLARSHIP

MISSOULA, Mont. –

A University of Montana doctoral student who works to save endangered bighorn sheep in California's Sierra Nevada has earned a scholarship from the 2007 Canon National Parks Science Scholars Program.

One of only four winners in the nation, Heather Johnson will receive \$80,000 over the next three years.

"I'm ecstatic about it," said Johnson, a wildlife biology major from **Bellevue, Wash.** "It's a big one to get. It was great to see the reviews of my proposal. I'm encouraged to see how excited they were about what we are doing."

Her adviser, Professor Scott Mills, said Johnson was selected from a pool of 150 applicants. "The competition was incredible," he said. "The funding rate was below 3 percent."

Johnson is employed by the Sierra Nevada Bighorn Sheep Recovery Program in the California Department of Fish and Game. She works to preserve a bighorn sheep subspecies there that is distinct from the Rocky Mountain bighorn found in Montana.

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“I go into the field during the winter and summer months,” she said, “so I’m just getting ready to start the winter field season that runs January through March.”

The Canon National Parks Science Scholars Program supports the development of the next generation of scientists in the fields of conservation, environmental science and park management. It is sponsored by Canon U.S.A., the American Association for the Advancement of Science and the U.S. National Park Service.

The scholarship program was established in 1997, and Canon Scholars have since conducted research in more than 85 national parks throughout the Americas and published more than 340 scientific papers. Four scholarships went to U.S. students this year, and four went to international students.

Canon U.S.A. delivers consumer, business-to-business and industrial imaging solutions. AAAS is the world’s largest general scientific society. The National Park Service preserves the natural and cultural resources of the National Park System for the enjoyment, education and inspiration of current and future generations.

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